WHAT IS CLAIMED IS:

1. An online merchandise return computer system, said computer system programmed to:

receive a merchandise return request by a consumer to return at least one item of merchandise; and

process said merchandise return request according to a set of return policy rules input by a merchant.

2. The online merchandise return computer system of Claim 1, wherein a subset of the return policy rules input by the merchant comprising:

a set of return questions;

a set of anticipated return question responses corresponding to each of said return questions; and

a set of return response rules, each return response rule corresponding to at least one of said anticipated return question responses.

3. The online merchandise return computer system of Claim 2, wherein each return response rule comprising a set of instructions to direct said computer system to perform an action to process the return request.

4. The online merchandise return computer system of Claim 3, wherein each set of return questions comprising a first return question and a set of subsequent return questions, said first return question having a corresponding set of anticipated first return question responses and each of said subsequent return questions having a corresponding set of anticipated subsequent return question responses.

5. The online merchandise return computer system of Claim 4, the computer system further programmed to:

select from the return policy rules set by the merchant the return questions; and

display to the user a first selected return question.

6. The online merchandise return computer system of Claim 5, the computer system further programmed to:

receive user input of a return question answer.

7. The online merchandise return computer system of Claim 6, the computer system further programmed to:

compare said return question answer to each of the anticipated first return question responses.

8. The online merchandise return computer system of Claim 7, the computer system further programmed to:

identify an anticipated first return question response that matches said return question answer.

9. The online merchandise return computer system of Claim 8, the computer system further programmed to:

direct the computer system to process the return request in accordance with the return question response rules that correspond to the anticipated first return question response that matches said return question answer.

10. The online merchandise return computer system of Claim 9, wherein the return policy rules further comprising a selection of carriers and services with which a consumer can ship a return package.

11. The online merchandise return computer system of Claim 10, the computer system further programmed to:

calculate a shipping rate for a package specified by the return request of the consumer for each of selected services offered by each of selected carriers according to a set of pricing rules for each of the selected carriers for each of the selected services.

12. The online merchandise return computer system of Claim 11, the computer system further programmed to:

generate a display of an interactive graphic comparison of shipping rates for the return request for shipping the particular package for each of the selected services offered by each of the selected carriers.

13. The online merchandise return computer system of Claim 12 wherein the interactive graphic shipping rate comparison display comprising an array.

14. The online merchandise return computer system of Claim 13 wherein said array comprising a plurality of cells.

15. The online merchandise return computer system of Claim 14 wherein each of said cells comprising an intersection of a delivery date and time for a particular carrier for a particular service.

16. The online merchandise return computer system of Claim 15, the computer system further programmed to:

receive as a return order user input of a selection of one of the cells of the array.

17. The online merchandise return computer system of Claim 16, the computer system further programmed to:

generate an internal system tracking number for the return order; and

save said internal system tracking number for the return order in a database.

18. The online merchandise return computer system of Claim 17, the computer system further programmed to:

generate a graphic representation of a shipping label corresponding to the return order; and

display the graphic representation of the shipping label on a display monitor connected to a computer accessible by the consumer.

19. The online merchandise return computer system of Claim 18, the computer system further programmed to:

generate a set of printable shipping label data in response to a shipping label print request by the consumer.

20. The online merchandise return computer system of Claim 19, the computer system further programmed to:

send in response to a user request to print a shipping label the set of printable shipping label data to a printer connected to the computer accessible by the user.

21. The online merchandise return computer system of Claim 20, wherein each return order with a tracking number is characterized by a shipping status, the computer system further programmed to:

generate a tracking report record depicting the shipping status of a return order in response to a user tracking report request for said return order.

22. An online merchandise return computer system, said computer system programmed to:

save a set of return policy rules input by a merchant in a database; and

receive a merchandise return request by a consumer to return at least one item of merchandise.

23. The online merchandise return computer system of Claim 22, said computer system further programmed to:

process said merchandise return request according to said set of return policy rules.

24. An online merchandise return computer system, said computer system programmed to:

collect a set of return policy rules input by a merchant; and

save said set of return policy rules in a database.

25. The online merchandise return computer system of Claim 24, said computer system further programmed to:

receive a merchandise return request by a consumer to return at least one item of merchandise.

26. The online merchandise return computer system of Claim 25, said computer system further programmed to:

process said merchandise return request according to said set of return policy rules.

27. An online merchandise return computer system, said computer system programmed to:

receive a merchandise return request by a consumer to return at least one item of merchandise;

generate in response to said merchandise return request a display of an interactive graphic comparison of shipping rates for the return request for shipping a package containing an item of merchandise to be returned, said display showing a shipping rate for each of a set of services offered by each of set of carriers, said carriers and services selected by the computer system for display according to a set of return policy rules input by a merchant; and

process said merchandise return request according to the set of return policy rules input by the merchant.

28. An online merchandise return computer system, said computer system programmed to save a set of return policy rules input by a merchant in a database as a three-dimensional situation response matrix, said matrix comprising:

a first dimension defining a set of return questions;

a second dimension defining, for each return question, a set of return question responses corresponding to the return question; and

a third dimension defining, for each return question response for each return question, a set of instructions to the computer system corresponding to the return question response corresponding to the return question.

29. The online merchandise return computer system of Claim 28, said computer system further programmed to:

receive a merchandise return request input by a consumer to return at least one item of merchandise; and

script an interactive exchange with the consumer in response to said merchandise return request according to the three-dimensional situation response matrix.

30. The online merchandise return computer system of Claim 29, said computer system further programmed to:

display a first question from said set of return questions;

receive a first answer input by the consumer in response to said first question;

select from the set of return question responses corresponding to the first question a return question response that corresponds to the first answer; and

direct the computer system to execute each instruction in the set of instructions corresponding to the return question response that corresponds to the first answer.

31. The online merchandise return computer system of Claim 30, wherein one of the instructions in the set of instructions corresponding to the return question response that corresponds to the first answer is to ask a next question from said set of return questions.

32. The online merchandise return computer system of Claim 31, said computer system further programmed to:

display the next question from said set of return questions;

receive a next answer input by the consumer in response to said next question;

select from the set of return question responses corresponding to the next question a return question response that corresponds to the next answer; and

direct the computer system to execute each instruction in the set of instructions corresponding to the return question response that corresponds to the next answer.

33. The online merchandise return computer system of Claim 30, said computer system further programmed to:

process said merchandise return request according to the set of instructions corresponding to the return question responses corresponding to each answer by the consumer to each return question asked by the computer system.

34. An online merchandise return computer system, said computer system programmed to:

display a question from a set of return questions;

receive an answer input by a consumer in response to said question;

select from a set of return question responses corresponding to the question a return question response that corresponds to the answer; and

direct the computer system to execute each instruction in a set of instructions corresponding to the return question response that corresponds to the answer.

35. An online merchandise return computer system, said computer system programmed to:

process a merchandise return request by a consumer according to a set of instructions that correspond to a set of return question responses that correspond to each answer by the consumer to each return question asked by the computer system.

36. The online merchandise return computer system of Claim 35, said computer system further programmed to:

recognize merchandise to be returned by the consumer according to product categories and product subcategories.

37. The online merchandise return computer system of Claim 36, said computer system further programmed to:

execute exception instructions for merchandise comprising an exception product category.

38. The online merchandise return computer system of Claim 36, said computer system further programmed to:

execute exception instructions for merchandise comprising an exception product subcategory.

39. A method using a computer for online merchandise return shipping, said method comprising:

receiving a merchandise return request by a consumer to return at least one item of merchandise; and

processing said merchandise return request according to a set of return policy rules input by a merchant.

40. The method of Claim 39, wherein a subset of the return policy rules input by the merchant comprising:

a set of return questions;

a set of anticipated return question responses corresponding to each of said return questions; and

a set of return response rules, each return response rule corresponding to at least one of said anticipated return question responses.

41. The method of Claim 40, wherein each return response rule comprising a set of instructions to direct said computer system to perform an action to process the return request.

42. The method of Claim 41, wherein each set of return questions comprising a first return question and a set of subsequent return questions, said first return question having a corresponding set of anticipated first return question responses and each of said subsequent return questions having a corresponding set of anticipated subsequent return question responses.

43. The method of Claim 42, the method further comprising:
selecting from the return policy rules set by the merchant the return questions; and
displaying to the user a first selected return question.

44. The method of Claim 43, the method further comprising:
receiving user input of a return question answer.

45. The method of Claim 44, the method further comprising:
comparing said return question answer to each of the anticipated first return question responses.

46. The method of Claim 45 the method further comprising:
identifying an anticipated first return question response that matches said return question answer.

47. The method of Claim 46, the method further comprising:
directing the computer system to process the return request in accordance with the return question response rules that correspond to the anticipated first return question response that matches said return question answer.

48. The method of Claim 47, wherein the return policy rules further comprising a selection of carriers and services with which a consumer can ship a return package.

49. The method of Claim 48, the method further comprising:
calculating a shipping rate for a package specified by the return request of the consumer for each of selected services offered by each of selected carriers according to a set of pricing rules for each of the selected carriers for each of the selected services.

50. The method of Claim 49, the method further comprising:
generating a display of an interactive graphic comparison of shipping rates for the return request for shipping the particular package for each of the selected services offered by each of the selected carriers.

51. The method of Claim 50 wherein the interactive graphic shipping rate comparison display comprising an array.

52. The method of Claim 51 wherein said array comprising a plurality of cells.

53. The method of Claim 52 wherein each of said cells comprising an intersection of a delivery date and time for a particular carrier for a particular service.

54. The method of Claim 53, the method further comprising:
receiving as a return order user input of a selection of one of the cells of the array.

55. The method of Claim 54, the method further comprising:
generating an internal system tracking number for the return order; and
saving said internal system tracking number for the return order in a database.

56. The method of Claim 55, the method further comprising:
generating a graphic representation of a shipping label corresponding to the return order; and
displaying the graphic representation of the shipping label on a display monitor connected to a computer accessible by the consumer.

57. The method of Claim 56, the method further comprising:
generating a set of printable shipping label data in response to a shipping label print request by the consumer.

58. The method of Claim 57, the method further comprising:
sending in response to a user request to print a shipping label the set of printable shipping label data to a printer connected to the computer accessible by the user.

59. The method of Claim 58, wherein each return order with a tracking number is characterized by a shipping status, the method further comprising:
generating a tracking report record depicting the shipping status of a return order in response to a user tracking report request for said return order.

60. A method using a computer for online merchandise return shipping, said method comprising:

saving a set of return policy rules input by a merchant in a database; and

receiving a merchandise return request by a consumer to return at least one item of merchandise.

61. The method of Claim 60, said method further comprising:

processing said merchandise return request according to said set of return policy rules.

62. A method using a computer for online merchandise return shipping, said method comprising:

collecting a set of return policy rules input by a merchant; and

saving said set of return policy rules in a database.

63. The method of Claim 62, said method further comprising:

receiving a merchandise return request by a consumer to return at least one item of merchandise.

64. The method of Claim 63, said method further comprising

processing said merchandise return request according to said set of return policy rules.

65. A method using a computer for online merchandise return shipping, said method comprising:

receiving a merchandise return request by a consumer to return at least one item of merchandise;

generating in response to said merchandise return request a display of an interactive graphic comparison of shipping rates for the return request for shipping a package containing an item of merchandise to be returned, said display showing a shipping rate for each of a set of services offered by each of set of carriers, said carriers and services selected by the computer system for display according to a set of return policy rules input by a merchant; and

processing said merchandise return request according to the set of return policy rules input by the merchant.

66. A method using a computer for online merchandise return shipping, said method comprising saving a set of return policy rules input by a merchant in a database as a three-dimensional situation response matrix, said matrix comprising:

a first dimension defining a set of return questions; a second dimension defining, for each return question, a set of return question responses corresponding to the return question; and

a third dimension defining, for each return question response for each return question, a set of instructions to the computer system corresponding to the return question response corresponding to the return question.

67. The method of Claim 66, said method further comprising:

receiving a merchandise return request input by a consumer to return at least one item of merchandise; and

scripting an interactive exchange with the consumer in response to said merchandise return request according to the three-dimensional situation response matrix.

68. The method of Claim 67, said method further comprising:

displaying a first question from said set of return questions;

receiving a first answer input by the consumer in response to said first question;

selecting from the set of return question responses corresponding to the first question a return question response that corresponds to the first answer; and

directing the computer system to execute each instruction in the set of instructions corresponding to the return question response that corresponds to the first answer.

69. The method of Claim 68, wherein one of the instructions in the set of instructions corresponding to the return question response that corresponds to the first answer is to ask a next question from said set of return questions.

70. The method of Claim 69, said method further comprising:

displaying the next question from said set of return questions;

receiving a next answer input by the consumer in response to said next question;

selecting from the set of return question responses corresponding to the next question a return question response that corresponds to the next answer; and

directing the computer system to execute each instruction in the set of instructions corresponding to the return question response that corresponds to the next answer.

71. The method of Claim 68, said method further comprising:

processing said merchandise return request according to the set of instructions corresponding to the return question responses corresponding to each answer by the consumer to each return question asked by the computer system.

72. A method using a computer for online merchandise return shipping, said method comprising:

displaying a question from a set of return questions;

receiving an answer input by a consumer in response to said question;

selecting from a set of return question responses corresponding to the question a return question response that corresponds to the answer; and

directing the computer system to execute each instruction in a set of instructions corresponding to the return question response that corresponds to the answer.

73. A method using a computer for online merchandise return shipping, said method comprising:

processing a merchandise return request by a consumer according to a set of instructions that correspond to a set of return question responses that correspond to each answer by the consumer to each return question asked by the computer system.

74. The method of Claim 73, said method further comprising:

recognizing merchandise to be returned by the consumer according to product categories and product subcategories.

75. The method of Claim 74, said method further comprising:

executing exception instructions for merchandise comprising an exception product category.

76. The method of Claim 74, said method further comprising:

executing exception instructions for merchandise comprising an exception product subcategory.

77. A computer product for online merchandise return shipping, said computer product having instructions for:

receiving a merchandise return request by a consumer to return at least one item of merchandise; and

processing said merchandise return request according to a set of return policy rules input by a merchant.

78. The computer product of Claim 77, wherein a subset of the return policy rules input by the merchant comprising:

a set of return questions;

a set of anticipated return question responses corresponding to each of said return questions; and

a set of return response rules, each return response rule corresponding to at least one of said anticipated return question responses.

79. The computer product of Claim 78, wherein each return response rule comprising a set of instructions to direct said computer system to perform an action to process the return request.

80. The computer product of Claim 79, wherein each set of return questions comprising a first return question and a set of subsequent return questions, said first return question having a corresponding set of anticipated first return question responses and each of said subsequent return questions having a corresponding set of anticipated subsequent return question responses.

81. The computer product of Claim 80, the computer product having further instructions for:

selecting from the return policy rules set by the merchant the return questions; and

displaying to the user a first selected return question.

82. The computer product of Claim 81, the computer product having further instructions for:

receiving user input of a return question answer.

83. The computer product of Claim 82, the computer product having further instructions for:

comparing said return question answer to each of the anticipated first return question responses.

84. The computer product of Claim 83, the computer product having further instructions for:

identifying an anticipated first return question response that matches said return question answer.

85. The computer product of Claim 84, the computer product having further instructions for:

directing the computer system to process the return request in accordance with the return question response rules that correspond to the anticipated first return question response that matches said return question answer.

86. The computer product of Claim 85, wherein the return policy rules further comprising a selection of carriers and services with which a consumer can ship a return package.

87. The computer product of Claim 86, the computer product having further instructions for:

calculating a shipping rate for a package specified by the return request of the consumer for each of selected services offered by each of selected carriers according to a set of pricing rules for each of the selected carriers for each of the selected services.

88. The computer product of Claim 87, the computer product having further instructions for:

generating a display of an interactive graphic comparison of shipping rates for the return request for shipping the particular package for each of the selected services offered by each of the selected carriers.

89. The computer product of Claim 88 wherein the interactive graphic shipping rate comparison display comprising an array.

90. The computer product of Claim 89 wherein said array comprising a plurality of cells.

91. The computer product of Claim 90 wherein each of said cells comprising an intersection of a delivery date and time for a particular carrier for a particular service.

92. The computer product of Claim 91, the computer product having further instructions for:

receiving as a return order user input of a selection of one of the cells of the array.

93. The computer product of Claim 92, the computer product having further instructions for:

generating an internal system tracking number for the return order; and

saving said internal system tracking number for the return order in a database.

94. The computer product of Claim 93, the computer product having further instructions for:

generating a graphic representation of a shipping label corresponding to the return order; and

displaying the graphic representation of the shipping label on a display monitor connected to a computer accessible by the consumer.

95. The computer product of Claim 94, the computer product having further instructions for:

generating a set of printable shipping label data in response to a shipping label print request by the consumer.

96. The computer product of Claim 95, the computer product having further instructions for:

sending in response to a user request to print a shipping label the set of printable shipping label data to a printer connected to the computer accessible by the user.

97. The computer product of Claim 96, wherein each return order with a tracking number is characterized by a shipping status, the computer product having further instructions for:

generating a tracking report record depicting the shipping status of a return order in response to a user tracking report request for said return order.

98. A computer product for online merchandise return shipping, said computer product having instructions for:

saving a set of return policy rules input by a merchant in a database; and

receiving a merchandise return request by a consumer to return at least one item of merchandise.

99. The computer product of Claim 98, the computer product having further instructions for:

processing said merchandise return request according to said set of return policy rules.

100. A computer product for online merchandise return shipping, said computer product having instructions for:

collecting a set of return policy rules input by a merchant; and

saving said set of return policy rules in a database.

101. The computer product of Claim 100, the computer product having further instructions for:

receiving a merchandise return request by a consumer to return at least one item of merchandise.

102. The computer product of Claim 101, the computer product having further instructions for:

processing said merchandise return request according to said set of return policy rules.

103. A computer product for online merchandise return shipping, said computer product having instructions for:

receiving a merchandise return request by a consumer to return at least one item of merchandise;

generating in response to said merchandise return request a display of an interactive graphic comparison of shipping rates for the return request for shipping a package containing an item of merchandise to be returned, said display showing a shipping rate for each of a set of services offered by each of set of carriers, said carriers and services selected by the computer system for display according to a set of return policy rules input by a merchant; and

processing said merchandise return request according to the set of return policy rules input by the merchant.

104. A computer product for online merchandise return shipping, said computer product having instructions for saving a set of return policy rules input by a merchant in a database as a three-dimensional situation response matrix, said matrix comprising:

a first dimension defining a set of return questions;

a second dimension defining, for each return question, a set of return question responses corresponding to the return question; and

a third dimension defining, for each return question response for each return question, a set of instructions to the computer system corresponding to the return question response corresponding to the return question.

105. The computer product of Claim 104, the computer product having further instructions for:

receiving a merchandise return request input by a consumer to return at least one item of merchandise; and

scripting an interactive exchange with the consumer in response to said merchandise return request according to the three-dimensional situation response matrix.

106. The computer product of Claim 105, the computer product having further instructions for:

displaying a first question from said set of return questions;

receiving a first answer input by the consumer in response to said first question;

selecting from the set of return question responses corresponding to the first question a return question response that corresponds to the first answer; and

directing the computer system to execute each instruction in the set of instructions corresponding to the return question response that corresponds to the first answer.

107. The computer product of Claim 106, wherein one of the instructions in the set of instructions corresponding to the return question response that corresponds to the first answer is to ask a next question from said set of return questions.

108. The computer product of Claim 107, the computer product having further instructions for:

displaying the next question from said set of return questions;

receiving a next answer input by the consumer in response to said next question;

selecting from the set of return question responses corresponding to the next question a return question response that corresponds to the next answer; and

directing the computer system to execute each instruction in the set of instructions corresponding to the return question response that corresponds to the next answer.

109. The computer product of Claim 106, the computer product having further instructions for:

processing said merchandise return request according to the set of instructions corresponding to the return question responses corresponding to each answer by the consumer to each return question asked by the computer system.

110. A computer product for online merchandise return shipping, said computer product having instructions for:

displaying a question from a set of return questions;

receiving an answer input by a consumer in response to said question;

selecting from a set of return question responses corresponding to the question a return question response that corresponds to the answer; and

directing the computer system to execute each instruction in a set of instructions corresponding to the return question response that corresponds to the answer.

111. A computer product for online merchandise return shipping, said computer product having instructions for:

processing a merchandise return request by a consumer according to a set of instructions that correspond to a set of return question responses that correspond to each answer by the consumer to each return question asked by the computer system.

112. The computer product of Claim 111, the computer product having further instructions for:

recognizing merchandise to be returned by the consumer according to product categories and product subcategories.

113. The computer product of Claim 112, the computer product having further instructions for:

executing exception instructions for merchandise comprising an exception product category.

114. The computer product of Claim 112, the computer product having further instructions for:

executing exception instructions for merchandise comprising an exception product subcategory.

115. A computer system for online merchandise return shipping, said computer system comprising:

a set of instructions for receiving a merchandise return request by a consumer to return at least one item of merchandise; and

a set of instructions for processing said merchandise return request according to a set of return policy rules input by a merchant.

116. The computer system of Claim 115, wherein a subset of the return policy rules input by the merchant comprising:

a set of return questions;

a set of anticipated return question responses corresponding to each of said return questions; and

a set of return response rules, each return response rule corresponding to at least one of said anticipated return question responses.

117. The computer system of Claim 116, wherein each return response rule comprising a set of instructions to direct said computer system to perform an action to process the return request.

118. The computer system of Claim 117, wherein each set of return questions comprising a first return question and a set of subsequent return questions, said first return question having a corresponding set of anticipated first return question responses and each of said subsequent return questions having a corresponding set of anticipated subsequent return question responses.

119. The computer system of Claim 118, the computer system further comprising:

a set of instructions for selecting from the return policy rules set by the merchant the return questions; and

a set of instructions for displaying to the user a first selected return question.

120. The computer system of Claim 119, the computer system further comprising:

a set of instructions for receiving user input of a return question answer.

121. The computer system of Claim 120, the computer system further comprising:

a set of instructions for comparing said return question answer to each of the anticipated first return question responses.

122. The computer system of Claim 121 the computer system further comprising:

a set of instructions for identifying an anticipated first return question response that matches said return question answer.

123. The computer system of Claim 122, the computer system further comprising:

a set of instructions for directing the computer system to process the return request in accordance with the return question response rules that correspond to the anticipated first return question response that matches said return question answer.

124. The computer system of Claim 123, wherein the return policy rules further comprising a selection of carriers and services with which a consumer can ship a return package.

125. The computer system of Claim 124, the computer system further comprising:

a set of instructions for calculating a shipping rate for a package specified by the return request of the consumer for each of selected services offered by each of selected carriers according to a set of pricing rules for each of the selected carriers for each of the selected services.

126. The computer system of Claim 125, the computer system further comprising:

a set of instructions for generating a display of an interactive graphic comparison of shipping rates for the return request for shipping the particular package for each of the selected services offered by each of the selected carriers.

127. The computer system of Claim 126 wherein the interactive graphic shipping rate comparison display comprising an array.

128. The computer system of Claim 127 wherein said array comprising a plurality of cells.

129. The computer system of Claim 128 wherein each of said cells comprising an intersection of a delivery date and time for a particular carrier for a particular service.

130. The computer system of Claim 129, the computer system further comprising:

a set of instructions for receiving as a return order user input of a selection of one of the cells of the array.

131. The computer system of Claim 130, the computer system further comprising:

a set of instructions for generating an internal system tracking number for the return order; and

a set of instructions for saving said internal system tracking number for the return order in a database.

132. The computer system of Claim 131, the computer system further comprising:

a set of instructions for generating a graphic representation of a shipping label corresponding to the return order; and

a set of instructions for displaying the graphic representation of the shipping label on a display monitor connected to a computer accessible by the consumer.

133. The computer system of Claim 132, the computer system further comprising:

a set of instructions for generating a set of printable shipping label data in response to a shipping label print request by the consumer.

134. The computer system of Claim 133, the computer system further comprising:

a set of instructions for sending in response to a user request to print a shipping label the set of printable shipping label data to a printer connected to the computer accessible by the user.

135. The computer system of Claim 134, wherein each return order with a tracking number is characterized by a shipping status, the computer system further comprising:

a set of instructions for generating a tracking report record depicting the shipping status of a return order in response to a user tracking report request for said return order.

136. A computer system for online merchandise return shipping, said computer system comprising:

a set of instructions for saving a set of return policy rules input by a merchant in a database; and

a set of instructions for receiving a merchandise return request by a consumer to return at least one item of merchandise.

137. The computer system of Claim 136, said computer system further comprising:

a set of instructions for processing said merchandise return request according to said set of return policy rules.

138. A computer system for online merchandise return shipping, said computer system comprising:

a set of instructions for collecting a set of return policy rules input by a merchant; and

a set of instructions for saving said set of return policy rules in a database.

139. The computer system of Claim 138, said computer system further comprising:

a set of instructions for receiving a merchandise return request by a consumer to return at least one item of merchandise.

140. The computer system of Claim 139, said computer system further comprising:

a set of instructions for processing said merchandise return request according to said set of return policy rules.

141. A computer system for online merchandise return shipping, said computer system comprising:

a set of instructions for receiving a merchandise return request by a consumer to return at least one item of merchandise;

a set of instructions for generating in response to said merchandise return request a display of an interactive graphic comparison of shipping rates for the return request for shipping a package containing an item of merchandise to be returned, said display showing a shipping rate for each of a set of services offered by each of set of carriers, said carriers and services selected by the computer system for display according to a set of return policy rules input by a merchant; and

a set of instructions for processing said merchandise return request according to the set of return policy rules input by the merchant.

142. A computer system for online merchandise return shipping, said computer system comprising a set of instructions for saving a set of return policy rules input by a merchant in a database as a three-dimensional situation response matrix, said matrix comprising:

a first dimension defining a set of return questions;

a second dimension defining, for each return question, a set of return question responses corresponding to the return question; and

a third dimension defining, for each return question response for each return question, a set of instructions to the computer system corresponding to the return question response corresponding to the return question.

143. The computer system of Claim 142, said computer system further comprising:

a set of instructions for receiving a merchandise return request input by a consumer to return at least one item of merchandise; and

a set of instructions for scripting an interactive exchange with the consumer in response to said merchandise return request according to the three-dimensional situation response matrix.

144. The computer system of Claim 143, said computer system further comprising:

a set of instructions for displaying a first question from said set of return questions;

a set of instructions for receiving a first answer input by the consumer in response to said first question;

a set of instructions for selecting from the set of return question responses corresponding to the first question a return question response that corresponds to the first answer; and

a set of instructions for directing the computer system to execute each instruction in the set of instructions corresponding to the return question response that corresponds to the first answer.

145. The computer system of Claim 144, wherein one of the instructions in the set of instructions corresponding to the return question response that corresponds to the first answer is to ask a next question from said set of return questions.

146. The computer system of Claim 145, said computer system further comprising:

a set of instructions for displaying the next question from said set of return questions;

a set of instructions for receiving a next answer input by the consumer in response to said next question;

a set of instructions for selecting from the set of return question responses corresponding to the next question a return question response that corresponds to the next answer; and

a set of instructions for directing the computer system to execute each instruction in the set of instructions corresponding to the return question response that corresponds to the next answer.

147. The computer system of Claim 144, said computer system further comprising:

a set of instructions for processing said merchandise return request according to the set of instructions corresponding to the return question responses corresponding to each answer by the consumer to each return question asked by the computer system.

148. A computer system for online merchandise return shipping, said computer system comprising:

a set of instructions for displaying a question from a set of return questions;

a set of instructions for receiving an answer input by a consumer in response to said question;

a set of instructions for selecting from a set of return question responses corresponding to the question a return question response that corresponds to the answer; and

a set of instructions for directing the computer system to execute each instruction in a set of instructions corresponding to the return question response that corresponds to the answer.

149. A computer system for online merchandise return shipping, said computer system comprising:

a set of instructions for processing a merchandise return request by a consumer according to a set of instructions that correspond to a set of return question responses that correspond to each answer by the consumer to each return question asked by the computer system.

150. The computer system of Claim 149, said computer system further comprising:

a set of instructions for recognizing merchandise to be returned by the consumer according to product categories and product subcategories.

151. The computer system of Claim 150, said computer system further comprising:

a set of instructions for executing exception instructions for merchandise comprising an exception product category.

152. The computer system of Claim 150, said computer system further comprising:

a set of instructions for executing exception instructions for merchandise comprising an exception product subcategory.

153. A merchandise return computer system, said computer system programmed to:

receive from a second computer system a request to rate shipment of a particular package by a plurality of carriers.

154. A merchandise return computer system, said computer system programmed to:

calculate a plurality of shipment rates for shipping a particular package in response to a request to rate shipment received from a second computer system.

155. The computer system of Claim 153, wherein each of the plurality of shipment rates corresponds to one of a plurality of carriers shipping the particular package according to one of a plurality of services offered by the carrier.

156. A merchandise return computer system, said computer system programmed to:

receive from a second computer system a request to process return shipment of a particular package by one of a plurality of carriers.

157. The computer system of Claim 156, said computer system further programmed to:

generate a response to the second computer system comprising a status of the request.

158. The computer system of Claim 157, wherein the status comprises one of a plurality of error conditions or a successful condition.

159. A merchandise return computer system, said computer system programmed to:

calculate a shipment rate for shipping a particular package in response to a request received from a second computer system to process return shipment of a particular package by one of a plurality of carriers.

160. A merchandise return computer system, said computer system programmed to:

generate as a response to a second computer system a shipping label for shipping a particular package in response to a request received from the second computer system to prepare a shipping label for shipping a particular package by one of a plurality of carriers.

161. The computer system of Claim 160, said computer system further programmed to:

send the shipping label response to the second computer system.

162. A merchandise return computer system, said computer system programmed to:

generate as a response to a second computer system a merchandise return label for return shipping of a particular package in response to a request received from the second computer

system to prepare a merchandise return label for return shipping a particular package by one of a plurality of carriers.

163. The computer system of Claim 162, said computer system further programmed to:

send the merchandise return label response to the second computer system.

164. A merchandise return computer system, said computer system programmed to:

designate as received a status of a particular return record in a database in response to a request received from a second computer system to identify as received a particular package, wherein the particular return record corresponds to the particular package.

165. A merchandise return computer system, said computer system programmed to:

obtain in response to a request received from a second computer system to process return shipment of a particular package a shipping status for the particular package from a carrier computer system.

166. A merchandise return computer system, said computer system programmed to:

store in a database a return record corresponding to a particular package in response to a request received from a second computer system to process return shipment of the particular package by one of a plurality of carriers.

167. A merchandise return computer system, said computer system programmed to:

generate a request to process return shipment of a particular package by one of a plurality of carriers; and

insert into the request a digital address of a second computer, said digital address corresponding to a location of said second computer in a global communications network.

168. A merchandise return computer system, said computer system programmed to:

generate a request to prepare a return shipping label for shipping a particular package by one of a plurality of carriers; and

insert into the request a digital address of a second computer, said digital address corresponding to a location of said second computer in a global communications network.

169. A merchandise return computer system, said computer system programmed to:

generate a request to prepare a merchandise return label for processing shipment of a particular package; and

insert into the request a digital address of a second computer, said digital address corresponding to a location of said second computer in a global communications network.